Simulation Theology

Section 1: Opening Hook and Framing
(5–7 minutes)

“The problem with Simulation Theory is that it keeps answering questions, making sense of the nonsensical aspects of our universe. And as long as it keeps answering questions it will remain a viable and relevant theory.”

Simulation Theory proposes that our universe is a created, rule-governed digital reality, something like an extraordinarily sophisticated video game running on a higher-order system. Everything, including all of us, is information executing under fixed laws.

Most people feel an immediate recoil when they first encounter this idea. The implication that we might be information rather than ultimate substance feels threatening. I experienced that resistance myself for a long time. The sense of unreality can be disorienting. Some of you will feel it even as I speak. That reaction is normal and should be acknowledged rather than minimized.

Yet the discomfort does not make the theory false. It only reveals how deeply we prefer to be the final reality. What makes Simulation Theory useful for evangelism is not that it flatters us, but that it continues to solve problems that other scientific models leave unresolved.

Consider the positives that become available once the initial repulsion is faced:

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The Simulation theory requires a Creator by definition. No other scientific model places a personal, intelligent originator at the foundation so cleanly.

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It answers open questions about the universe without multiplying new questions and paradoxes. Origin from nothing, quantum non-locality, time dilation, and quantum measurement effects all become coherently clear within a single framework.

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It reframes miracles. Instead of arbitrary violations of nature, they appear as authorized overrides performed by the One who wrote the code, always carrying an associated cost that preserves the value of the rules.

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Once the value of rules is understood, both the character of God and the text of Scripture become coherent rather than arbitrary. The biblical record begins to look like the operating documentation of a lawful system rather than a collection of disconnected stories and commands.

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This is why Simulation Theology belongs in the toolkit of church leaders who want to reach the intellectually minded. Relational methods such as S.A.L.T. remain valuable. They excel at starting conversations, asking questions, listening carefully, and telling the story of Jesus in a personal way. What Simulation Theology supplies is the missing operating system under which everything can be understood. It meets skeptics, scientists, philosophers, tech professionals, and gamers at the level of their actual questions about God. It addresses consistency, explanatory power, and the demand that any worldview account for both the laws of the universe and the text of Scripture without special pleading.

Our goal in this session is practical. We are not introducing a novelty or a philosophical curiosity. We are equipping you with a coherent framework you can use yourself and train others to use. By the end of our time together you will be able to define the theory clearly, address the repulsion it creates, explain its key analogies, show how it resolves major scientific and biblical questions, and move from intellectual coherence to a natural gospel invitation.

The intellectually minded often respect a system that does not flinch from its own implications. Simulation Theology does not flinch. That is why it can open doors that purely relational approaches sometimes leave closed.

Let us begin by looking more closely at what the theory actually claims and how the video-game comparison makes it accessible.

Section 2: Defining Simulation Theory and the Video-Game Analogy

(12–15 minutes)

Most of us have never seriously considered the possibility that the world we live in might be a simulation. The idea can sound strange, even unsettling, the first time it is heard. So we will move slowly and begin with the simplest possible explanation.

Simulation Theory is the idea that our entire universe, including our bodies, our thoughts, and the physical world around us, is a digital simulated reality. In other words, everything we experience is information running inside a vast, highly advanced system, similar in principle to a video game, only far more sophisticated. The objects we see, the laws of physics we observe, and even our own sense of self are all part of this programmed reality.

To understand how this could even be possible, start with something every person has already experienced: a dream.

When you dream, your mind creates a complete world. You can walk through a field, feel the sun on your face, hear the wind, and talk with other people. In that moment the experience feels real. You are not using your physical eyes or ears. Your brain is generating the entire environment, complete with consistent rules of movement and sensation. If you never woke up, you would have no reason to question whether that dream world was the true reality. This everyday experience shows that a finite system, the human brain, is already capable of producing a convincing three-dimensional world with lawful cohesion. If the brain can do this as a side activity while we sleep, it becomes easier to imagine that a far greater system could generate an entire universe as its primary purpose.

Now consider a more familiar modern example that builds directly on the dream. Video games and virtual reality are simply external versions of the same ability our minds already demonstrate while we sleep: the creation of a convincing virtual world.

In a game such as Skyrim or any large open-world video game, an entire environment is generated according to rules. The world only fully appears when the player is present to see it. Characters move and speak according to programmed behaviors. With simple console commands the weather can be changed instantly, a dead character can be brought back to life, the player can be given the ability to walk through solid walls, and time itself can be paused or sped up. These are limited and imperfect versions of effects we already see in Scripture. God calmed a storm with a word, raised the dead, caused people to pass through locked doors or solid barriers, and stopped the sun in the sky. The console commands in a game are small, human-made copies of the kind of authority the Creator of a real simulated universe would naturally possess.

Virtual reality carries the comparison further. Today we have already mastered sight and sound inside digital spaces. A person wearing a headset can look around a generated world, hear sounds that seem to come from specific directions, and feel present inside that environment. In the near future as we develop VR body suits, we will also master smell, taste, and touch. When that happens there will be no discernible difference between the virtual world and the world we currently call real. At that point, taking off the VR suit will change nothing in a person’s perception of what is and is not real. The experience of reality will have become fully transferable between the physical body and the generated environment, just as the dream already shows us that a complete world can be generated without any physical eyes or ears.

If our universe works in a similar way, then several things follow naturally.

What we call matter would be structured information rather than solid substance. The laws of physics would function like the rules of the program stemming from the source code that keeps everything consistent. When scientists observe the quantum effects of how measuring a particle changes its behavior, or that two particles can affect each other instantly across great distances, these effects begin to look like the behavior of a system that only fully calculates and displays for what is being observed, much as a game engine

does not render any detail of the world that the player is not currently looking at.

Two major implications rise to the surface once this picture is considered.

First, it raises the possibility that we ourselves are part of the information inside the system rather than substantive independent beings. That thought can feel uncomfortable and unsettling as it removes our mental safety net of substantive permanence.

Second, if the universe is a simulation, then by definition there must be a Creator who designed and sustains it. Someone outside the simulation is required to write the code, set the rules, and keep the whole reality running.

This is the basic claim of Simulation Theory stated as simply as possible. It is not offered here as proven fact, nor as a curiosity for its own sake. It is presented because the idea continues to account for a growing number of strange features in both physics and human experience without creating a long list of new complications. The universe already behaves in ways that look remarkably like a high-fidelity, rule-governed simulation. Once that possibility is taken seriously, the next questions become clear: What does this framework explain about the physical world, and how does it relate to the picture of reality given in Scripture?

We will turn to those questions now.

Section 3: How Simulation Theory Answers Questions About the Universe and the Bible

(12–15 minutes)

Once the basic idea of a simulated universe is clear, the next question is practical: What does this framework actually explain? Does it help us understand the strange features of the physical world, and does it shed light on the events recorded in Scripture? We will look at both, beginning with the universe itself.

Science has long struggled with several deep problems. Simulation Theory does not solve every mystery, yet it offers straightforward answers to some of the most persistent ones.

First, the origin of the universe. Standard physics has no clear explanation for how everything came from nothing. A simulation, however, does not exist until it is turned on. Just as a video game world appears only when the program is launched, a simulated universe begins when its Creator powers it on. It is much easier to simulate a universe than to create a physical universe from scratch. Existence itself becomes a gift rather than an unexplained accident.

Second, Simulation Theory explains the strange behavior of the smallest particles. Scientists have discovered that two particles can become linked so that a change in one instantly affects the other, even when they are separated by vast distances. This is called quantum entanglement. In ordinary experience nothing travels faster than light, yet this connection appears to ignore distance entirely. In a simulated universe the explanation is simple. The two particles are variables inside the same program. When one is changed, the code updates the other immediately because both are part of the same system and are of equal distance to the processor. There is no need for a signal to travel across space because space doesn’t exist. Our universe is not three dimensional but is a two dimensional universe that creates a three dimensional illusion.

A related puzzle is the double-slit experiment. When tiny particles are fired at a barrier through two openings, they behave like waves and create an interference pattern with many lines of impact on the detector if no one observes which path they take. The moment they are observed, they behave like solid particles and create only two lines of impact. It is as if the universe waits to decide how a particle will behave until it is observed. This matches the way a computer generates a virtual world. The computer system does not calculate every detail of an environment the player is not looking at. Everything else in the game that is not being observed is just numbers running in the background. It only fully renders what is being observed. This is the same thing that is happening in the double slit experiment. When the light particle is not being observed it is just numbers running in the background and it doesn’t physically exist and hits every spot on the detector where it can possibly be. Only when we observe light particles does the universe render them into existence and act like physical stuff. The

act of observation forces our simulated universe to commit to a definite result. Just as a wolf that is biting your butt in a video game is not rendered into existence until you turn around and look at it.

Time itself also behaves in unexpected ways. Near very massive objects or at extremely high speeds, time slows down relative to the rest of the universe. This is the same thing we see in computers when they run heavily intensive programs. The computer system lags or slows down as it processes a large volume of data. Our universe has disguised lag as being part of the fabric of reality when it is actually just managing resources.

These examples show that many of the strangest discoveries in modern physics look less mysterious once the universe is viewed as a rule-governed simulation. The data begins to resemble the behavior of a high-fidelity program rather than a collection of unrelated oddities.

The same framework also illuminates the miracles recorded in the Bible.

If the universe is a simulation, then the One who wrote the code has the authority to issue commands that alter it. Miracles are not random violations of nature. They are authorized overrides performed by the Creator. In the same way a player or administrator can type a console command to change the weather, raise a character from the dead, or walk through a wall, God speaks and the system responds. Jesus calming the storm, raising Lazarus, walking through walls, and multiplying food are all consistent with the actions of Someone who has full administrative access to the simulation.

Yet these overrides are never treated as cheap or casual. Every significant miracle in Scripture carries a cost measured in time, suffering, persistent prayer, or faith. That cost protects the value of the rules themselves. If the Creator constantly overrides the code lawlessly, the rules would lose their meaning and the universe would become not worth existing in. By attaching a real price to every intervention, God preserves the integrity of the system He designed.

Finally, the theory offers a new theoretical idea on how God sustains such a vast reality. Maintaining a universe as detailed as

ours would require enormous processing power. One elegant solution is that the simulation is designed to be self-sustaining. Human beings inside the universe are the processors that contribute to the system's ongoing operation. Think about a Massive Multiplayer Online Game or MMO where thousands of players play together in the same simulated universe. The MMO is on one large high end server. Despite the servers computational power, it doesn't have the capacity to process all the rendering required to create the universe for thousands of players. Each player has a personal computer that does the processing for the server and allows the player to enter the universe on the main server. If we are living in a simulation then our processors are just as digital and non-physical as we are. If this is true then it is possible that each of us are also digital processors for the universe we live in and it is actually our processing observation is what brings the universe into existence. By this means there will always be enough computational power to generate the universe for each individual person, no matter how many people exist throughout the universe. This is a clean explaination on how God can sustain our digital universe.

Taken together, these points show why Simulation Theory continues to attract attention, as it stands as the only theory of creation that is testable and repeatable. It does not merely invent a new story. It offers a single coherent way of understanding both the puzzling behavior of the physical universe and the pattern of divine action and power recorded in Scripture. The scientific anomalies of our universe begin to look like features of a programmed system. The miracles begin to look like the deliberate commands of the One who wrote the program. And the consistent cost attached to those commands reveals a Creator who values the rules of His own universe enough to pay a price whenever He intervenes.

This is the explanatory power that makes the framework useful. It does not replace faith. It removes unnecessary confusion so that the biblical picture of a lawful, purposeful, personally governed universe can be seen more clearly.

Section 4: The Value of Rules and Alignment with God's Words and Actions
(10–12 minutes)

We have seen that Simulation Theory offers a coherent way to understand both the strange behavior of the physical universe and the miracles recorded in Scripture. The next step is the most important one. It is the hinge that turns a scientific idea into a theological framework. That hinge is the value of rules.

In any video game, athletic competition, movie, board game, or story book that people value, it is the rules that give them their value and meaning. Think of any sport. The rules of the game such as the boundaries, the scoring system, and the restrictions on what players are allowed to do are not obstacles to the game. They are the reason the game exists. Without rules, there is no contest, no achievement, and no point. The same is true of a video game. If every player can freely do whatever they want such as, ignore the physics, and rewrite the outcome at any moment, the experience quickly loses meaning and purpose, Then actions no longer matter. Victory becomes empty. The world itself becomes trivial.

Our simulated universe follows the same principle. The rules are not arbitrary restrictions imposed by a distant authority. They are the structure that gives every action, every choice, and every consequence its significance. If the Creator constantly overrode the rules for convenience, the entire system would lose its value and Existence would become meaningless.

This is why the biblical record is so careful about the way God acts. Scripture never presents miracles as casual or cost-free. Every significant intervention carries a real price. The price may be measured in long periods of waiting, in suffering, in persistent prayer, or in personal sacrifice. That cost is not evidence of God's reluctance to help us. It is evidence that God treats His own rules as having genuine value. He will intervene, but He does so in a way that protects the integrity of the system He designed.

We see this pattern clearly in the authority God gave to humanity. In Genesis 1:26 God declares that human beings are to rule over the earth. This is not a suggestion. It is a legal transfer of responsibility. From that moment forward, God consistently works

with and through the authority He has given us rather than casually overriding it. When He does intervene in dramatic ways, the cost is high. The cross itself is the ultimate example. The Creator entered His own system, lived under its rules, and paid the full price required to restore what had been broken in the Garden of Eden.

Psalm 138:2 states that God has magnified His word above all His name. In other words, the rules He has spoken are not optional even for Him as God's Word is God's God. He binds Himself to what He has said. This is the opposite of an arbitrary deity who changes standards whenever it is convenient. It is the behavior of a Creator who values the consistency of His own design. Psalms 33:6 states that God created the universe and all the rules that govern it with His own Word. Therefore the rules of our universe are God's God as well and must be respected.

Once this is understood, many things in Scripture become clearer. The miracles are not random displays of power. They are deliberate, costly overrides performed by the One who wrote the code. The long delays, the requirements of faith, and the suffering that often precedes deliverance are not signs that God is distant. They are signs that He refuses to devalue the rules that give the universe its meaning.

The value of rules, then, is not a side point. It is the central insight that makes Simulation Theory useful for understanding the God of the Bible. A universe without meaningful rules would be chaotic and pointless. A Creator who ignored His own rules would be inconsistent and untrustworthy. The biblical picture shows us neither of these things. It shows a God who established real rules, who honors them even when it costs Him, and who intervenes only in ways that preserve the significance of the world He has made.

This is the alignment we have been moving toward. The scientific anomalies look like features of a programmed system. The miracles look like the commands of the Programmer. And the consistent cost attached to those commands reveals a Creator who values the rules of His universe enough to pay a price whenever He acts inside it. That combination is what makes the framework coherent. It does not invent a new God. It allows us to see more clearly the God who has already spoken and acted in history.

Section 5: From Intellectual Coherence to Gospel Invitation and Practical Training
(8–10 minutes)

We have moved from the basic idea of a simulated universe, through the scientific and biblical questions it helps answer, to the central insight that rules create meaning and that God Himself honors the rules He established. At this point the framework is coherent. The remaining task is to show how that coherence leads naturally to the gospel, and then to equip you with practical ways to use it.

If the universe is a rule-governed simulation created by God, then human purpose is not escape from the physical world into pure spirit. Purpose is faithful operation inside the system God designed. Humanity was given real authority and real responsibility. The long-term destiny described in Scripture is not the abandonment of creation but the renewal of it. The new earth and the New Jerusalem are the continuation and completion of the physical universe God made, now under the shared rule of Christ and those who have been aligned with Him. We were made to function as faithful administrators within the creation, not as temporary visitors waiting to leave it behind.

Sin, in this light, is more than a list of moral failures. It is the violation of the code that gives the system its integrity. Every act of rebellion degrades both the agent and the world the agent was meant to steward. The damage is real because the rules are real. This is why the consequences of sin cannot be ignored or casually dismissed. The system itself registers the violation.

Jesus is the only human being who ran the code perfectly. He lived in full alignment with the Father’s will and never introduced corruption into the system. At the cross He paid the full legal cost required to address the violations of the entire human race. Because He is both the Creator’s perfect representative and the one who absorbed the penalty, He now holds the authority to restore legal standing to anyone who comes to Him. Belief, then, is not merely agreeing with certain facts. It is the decision to realign with the original design under His authority, receiving the forgiveness and the restored access He alone can give.

This is the natural pathway from intellectual coherence to gospel invitation. Once a person sees that the universe is a purposeful, rule-governed system, that God honors His own rules even at great cost, and that Jesus is the only one who perfectly kept and then redeemed the system, the invitation follows without force. The question becomes whether the listener will continue operating in rebellion against the design or will turn and submit to the One who both made the rules and paid the price to restore those who broke them.

For practical use, several conversational entry points are helpful when speaking with intellectually minded people:

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“Have you noticed that some of the strangest findings in physics look a lot like the behavior of a computer program that only fully calculates what is being observed?”

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“If miracles are real, what would have to be true about the universe for them to happen without destroying the reliability of natural laws?”

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“If rules are what give any system its meaning, what does that suggest about a God who refuses to break His own rules even when it costs Him everything?”

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Common objections can be met briefly and calmly.
If someone says the idea makes us unreal, the reply is that reality is defined by consistent interaction under rules, not by the underlying substrate. A dream feels real while it is happening. The deeper reality is the Creator who sustains the system.
If someone claims free will disappears, the reply is that free agents are part of the design. The rules constrain outcomes without scripting every choice, just as the physics of a game limit what is possible without removing player decision.

If the problem of suffering is raised, the reply is that real rules, real freedom, and real costs are required for a meaningful universe. A world without cost would also be a world without significance.

This tool does not replace personal testimony or relational evangelism. It is a complement. Relational methods remain essential for building trust and communicating care. Simulation Theology simply supplies the intellectual bridge for those whose primary barrier is coherence. When the framework makes sense, the invitation to realign with the Creator becomes the reasonable next step rather than an emotional leap.

Leaders, you now have a coherent sequence you can use and teach. Begin with the simple claim and the dream analogy. Build through the video-game comparison and the scientific and biblical questions it answers. Establish the value of rules as the hinge. Then move naturally to purpose, sin, the work of Christ, and the invitation to realign. Practice the sequence. Train others in it. Use it with those who demand that a worldview actually fit the data of both the universe and Scripture.

The intellectually minded often respect a system that does not flinch from its own implications. This framework does not flinch. That is why it can open doors that remain closed to less coherent approaches. Use it well.